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# MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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A summary of significant events of  
interest to USDA management

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1979 ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION AWARDS CEREMONY.....The first annual Assistant Secretary for Administration Awards Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, June 20 in the Jefferson Auditorium at 11:00 a.m. Awards will be presented for outstanding achievement and length of service to employees under the jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary and others in the Department who have contributed to programs under her responsibility.

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETINGS.....The Management Staff has been assigned responsibility for preparing the agenda for the monthly Management Council meetings. To make this a successful effort we need the cooperation of all Management Council members. Please submit suggestions for agenda items as far in advance of the meetings as possible. These should include staff office or agency items that would be of interest to all participants. These could be items of interest that someone from your office or agency would present or other items on issues you would like to hear more about. Please submit these items to Neil Van Vliet, Room 115-A, ext. 76983.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.....On June 14, Deputy Secretary Williams will meet with USDA members of the American Society for Public Administration and other USDA employees interested in better management in the Department. This will be a brown bag luncheon meeting and will provide an informal forum for questions and answers. The meeting will be held in room 218-A from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Space is limited. Please call Margaret Brown, ext. 73247 if you plan to attend.

RENTAL CAR RATES.....O&F has entered into an agreement with Budget Rent-A-Car which entitled all USDA travelers to Budget's best rental rates. To receive these rates, employees must present a valid travel authorization, USDA identification card, or a Budget identification sticker at the time of rental. Budget identification stickers are available from the Procurement Division, O&F, upon request.

Travelers are reminded that in accordance with Federal Property Management Regulations they should use GSA motor pool and Federal Supply Schedule contractor vehicles, if available, before renting a vehicle from Budget. Travelers who wish to use a rental company other than Budget may do so. (Contact: Tony Cooch, O&F, ext. 77527)

GAO AUDIT OF GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.....GAO recently released a report titled "Federal Cost Principles are often not Applied in Grants and Contracts with State and Local Governments." This report is generally critical of Federal agencies for not complying with established cost principles of Federal Management Circular 74-4 (OMB Circular No. A-87). The USDA was one of ten Federal agencies covered by the report. Although the Department was not singled out for direct criticism, we are charged with the responsibility to insure that:

- Department regulations and procedures are consistent with the Circular.
- Operational practices of USDA agencies are consistent with Departmental regulations and policies and with OMB requirements.
- Departmental agencies have the capacity and are providing necessary training, instruction and technical assistance to (1) state and local government grantees in preparing and using cost allocation plans, (2) Departmental and state agency personnel in reviewing and approving cost allocations plans and (3) Departmental and state funding personnel in using cost allocation plans in awarding grants and contracts.

GAO has charged OMB to adopt a more active monitoring role regarding FMC 74-4 within the Executive agencies. Increased oversight for USDA programs that are, or should be, using FMC 74-4 should be anticipated. (Contact: Don Manns, O&F, ext. 75630)

JOINT FUNDING OF FEDERAL GRANTS.....The Joint Funding Simplification Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-510) became law on December 5, 1974. The Act, with an original five year life, will expire in December of this year unless it is extended. Its primary purpose is to simplify the Federal grants administration process by permitting two or more Federal agencies to make related grant awards to recipients under a single application, a single management fund, a single audit and standardized reporting requirements using a "lead agency" as the primary administering agency. The process was to be especially useful for coordinating and jointly funding planning and/or economic development type grants from two or more Federal agencies. OMB was required to evaluate the process and submit a report to Congress with recommendations for continuance or necessary revisions one year prior to the expiration of the Act. The report has been issued. It indicates that joint funding has had very limited success over the past four years (only 10 projects currently operating government-wide) and is fairly critical of OMB and the rest of Federal establishment for lack of support. In spite of the unfavorable report, OMB has recommended that the Act be extended for a minimum of five years and is now developing a plan to promote wide use of joint funding in future grant awards. The Farmers Home Administration and the Forest Service are the only two USDA agencies with programs currently identified as being suitable for joint funding. (Contact: Don Manns, O&F, ext. 75630)



FIRST CLASS AIR TRAVEL.....Regulations on first-class air travel restrictions for employees traveling on official business were issued by GSA on March 13, 1978. The Department's semiannual report to GSA for the period October 1, 1978 through March 31, 1979 shows that first-class travel was approved or authorized for 39 employees at an extra cost of \$5,729. In the prior six month period, 62 employees traveled first-class at an increased cost of \$4,936. It is important to stress the continuing requirement for all employees to avoid the use of first-class travel. (Contact: Sandra Kazimer, O&F, ext. 77251)

PROMOTIONAL DISCOUNTS OFFERED BY AIRLINES.....A number of airlines are offering half fare coupons or other forms of promotional discount fares to passengers. Employees traveling on government business should be aware that all discount coupons or gifts are the property of the Government and discount coupons received must be turned over to appropriate agency officials. All employees traveling on government business should take advantage of all discounts whenever possible. (Contact: Paul Seese, O&F, ext. 77251)

USDA LABORATORY SURVEY.....The Office of Safety and Health Management (OSHM) is conducting a survey to determine the status of laboratory occupational health programs in USDA. The survey will document the use and storage of toxic materials in chemical laboratories and the types of protective equipment used to control chemical exposure. The end result will be the development of an occupational health and industrial hygiene program for the Department's 400 chemical laboratories. (Contact: John Teske, OSHM, 472-2320)

OMB CIRCULAR A-76.....A revised A-76 (Policies for Acquiring Commercial or Industrial Products and Services Needed by the Government) has been issued by OMB. A draft of the Department's implementing regulations, 5AR600, were transmitted to all agencies and staff offices on May 22 and comments were due June 6. The final 5AR600 will be released prior to August 1. (Contact: Gwen Powers, Management Staff, ext. 76983)

MINORITY AND WOMEN EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.....The EEO Tracking and Evaluation System shows that, as of late March, women account for less than two percent of USDA permanent full time, general schedule employment in the following key occupational series: 0110, Economist; 0414, Entomology; 0436, Plant Quarantine and Pest Control; 0454, Technician; 0460, Forestry; 0462, Forestry Technician; 0470, Soil Science; 0475, Agricultural Management; 0701, Veterinarian; 0704, Animal Health Technician; 0802, Engineering Technician; 0810 Civil Engineering and 1980, Agricultural Commodity Grading. Women account for more than seven percent of USDA employment in: 0120, Food Program Specialist; 0301, General Administrative and 0501, General Accounting Clerk and Administration. Of the 25 key occupational series included in the EEO Tracking and Evaluation System and representing 54,278 USDA employees, women account for only 2.02 percent. Minority occupational series will be included in next month's Management Council Newsletter. (Contact: Jackie Sutton, OEO, ext. 77813)

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.....USDA agencies reported a total of \$11.5 million in contracts awarded to minority-owned firms for the first half of FY 79. This figure represents a 44.7 percent increase over the same period one year ago. The cumulative total for FY 78-79 is \$34.6 million or 91% of the Department's effort to triple the FY 1977 figure. The Department expects to exceed its \$38.1 million goal by a substantial amount. (Contact: Paul J. McCloskey, OEO, 77921)

## 1979 SAVINGS BOND CAMPAIGN

### PROGRESS REPORT

as of

June 7, 1979

| Agency | Total<br>New<br>Allotments | Total<br>Allotment<br>Increases | Percent<br>Participation |         |
|--------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
|        |                            |                                 | Beginning                | Current |
| AMS    | 103                        | 77                              | 78                       | 84      |
| APHIS  | 143                        | 111                             | 60                       | 63      |
| ASCS   | 124                        | 86                              | 67                       | 72      |
| ESCS   | 150                        | 114                             | 67                       | 74      |
| FAS    | 13                         | 11                              | 55                       | 57      |
| FCIC   | 36                         | 20                              | 94                       | 100     |
| FGIS   | 162                        | 111                             | 55                       | 65      |
| FmHA   | 328                        | 213                             | 88                       | 92      |
| FNS    | 156                        | 211                             | 77                       | 84      |
| FS     | 717                        | 382                             | 57                       | 60      |
| FSQS   | 239                        | 226                             | 62                       | 64      |
| GPA    | 27                         | 9                               | 45                       | 59      |
| MS     | 9                          | 2                               | 67                       | 100     |
| OALJ   | 1                          | 4                               | 56                       | 63      |
| OBPE   | 1                          | 5                               | 65                       | 66      |
| OEO    | 2                          | 5                               | 63                       | 67      |
| O&F    | 181                        | 196                             | 74                       | 87      |
| OGC    | 22                         | 18                              | 56                       | 63      |
| OGSM   | -                          | -                               | 64                       | 64      |
| OICD   | 4                          | 3                               | 51                       | 55      |
| OIG    | 48                         | 30                              | 63                       | 68      |
| OP     | 3                          | 4                               | 60                       | 63      |
| OSHM   | 2                          | -                               | 82                       | 100     |
| OT     | -                          | -                               | 61                       | 61      |
| REA    | 40                         | 33                              | 70                       | 76      |
| SCS    | 362                        | 390                             | 74                       | 77      |
| SEA    | 193                        | 172                             | 61                       | 63      |
| SEC    | 1                          | 1                               | 52                       | 53      |
| WFAOSB | 3                          | -                               | 67                       | 87      |
| <hr/>  |                            |                                 |                          |         |
| USDA   | 3,070                      | 2,434                           | 66                       | 70      |
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